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TURKEY WOULD LET U-2 USE ITS AIRSPACE IF SOVIET APPROVED

Condition on Use of the Spy Plane
for Verification of Arms Pact
Is Made Public in Ankara

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN

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WASHINGTON, May 14 — Turkey has told the United States that only if Moscow does not object will it allow the American U-2 reconnaissance planes to fly over its territory to check on Soviet compliance with the arms limitation treaty.

A statement made public in Ankara by the Turkish Foreign Ministry thus confirmed articles in the Turkish press about one of the most delicate sets of negotiations in recent years.

The statement caused consternation in the Carter Administration because it raised the question again whether the arms accord, to be signed next month in Vienna by President Carter and Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Soviet leader, could be adequately verified.

Linkage to More Economic Aid

In addition, the issue of whether the high-flying reconnaissance planes can carry out their mission has caused problems in the Administration's efforts to obtain Congressional approval for more economic and military aid to Turkey.

After the loss of two electronic listening posts in Iran, the Carter Administration told members of Congress last month that it was considering the use of the U-2 planes to fly in Turkish airspace close to the Soviet border to monitor Soviet missile test firings at the Baikonur launching site at Leninsk in Central Asia.

The information, augmented by satellites and by land stations in Turkey, was to be used to compensate for the loss of the Iranian stations. The data was to be used to check on Soviet compliance with the limits placed in the arms treaty on modernization and other aspects of land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles.

According to the Turkish accounts, President Carter sent a three-page letter to Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit explaining the American need for the use of Turkish airspace.

In negotiations early last week with Deputy Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher, Mr. Ecevit, according to the

Turkish press, said he would not permit the U-2 flights unless Moscow agreed.

Authoritative sources here said Mr. Ecevit was trying to be cooperative but was wary of leftist pressures if he appeared to be agreeing to the American plan in the face of Soviet criticism. Moreover, the sources said, although Turkey is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Mr. Ecevit does not want to upset relations with Moscow.

Officials here were unwilling to speculate whether Moscow might be willing to go along with the U-2 monitoring plan. One official said that, if the Soviet Union did not agree, this might hurt the chances for ratification in the Senate. So far, the United States has not raised the matter with the Soviet Union.

The arms treaty states that each side will use "national technical means" to check on the other's compliance. It also bars either side from interfering with those "national technical means." In practice this has meant that there would be no on-site inspection, but that reconnaissance satellites and other electronic intelligence devices could be used.

U-2 Plan Poses Problem for Soviet

The use of U-2's in Turkey raises the problem for the Soviet Union that the planes may be carrying out intelligence missions beyond checking on compliance with the treaty. On the other hand, if the Soviet Union did not agree to the U-2 plan, the question may arise whether this represents interference with "national technical means."

Today's Turkish Foreign Ministry statement on the request for U-2 overflights said:

"In response to the United States request, it has been pointed out that Turkey attaches great importance to SALT II and to its effective implementation. However, since Turkey is not a party to this treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union and as the text is not fully known to its Government, the subject could be taken up in the authoritative Turkish governmental bodies only if it is determined by Turkey that the requested contribution advances the objectives and concurs with the understanding of the parties to the treaty."

Stressing Turkey's desire for good relations with the Soviet Union, the statement said: "It is only natural that Turkey takes into consideration its own security and relations with its neighbors and takes care to base its relations with its neighbors on mutual trust."

The Soviet press has been critical of reported plans to use Turkish airspace for U-2 reconnaissance missions. Because of the celebrated case of Francis Gary Powers, whose U-2 was based in Incirlik, Turkey, the U-2 has become synonymous with espionage. Mr. Powers' plane was shot down in 1960 while flying over Soviet territory. The current plan is for the U-2's to be stationed at a British base in Cyprus and to fly only over Turkish territory.